

resources of that Paradise on earth and killed the intellectual 000
and moral life of its people. The administration of justice 692
and the collection of the taxes in Dardistan are carried on, 651
the former with some show of respect for religious injunc-
tions, the latter with sole regard to whatever the tax-gatherer
can immediately lay his hand upon.

I. HABITATIONS.

Most of the villages, whose names I have given else- 361
where, are situate on the main line of roads which, as
everywhere in Himalayan countries, generally coincides
with the course of rivers. The villages are sometimes
scattered, but as a rule, the houses are closely packed
together. Stones are heaped up and closely cemented, and [342]
the upper story, which often is only a space shielded by
a cloth or by grass-bundles on a few poles, is generally
reached by a staircase from the outside.* Most villages [712] •
are protected by one or more wooden forts, which—with
the exception of the Gilgit fort—are rude blockhouses,
garnished with rows of beams, behind which it is easy to
fight as long as the place is not set on fire. Most villages [512]
also contain an open space, generally near a fountain, where
the villagers meet in the evening and young people make
love to each other.† Sometimes the houses contain a 342
subterranean apartment which is used as a cellar or stable—
at other times, the stable forms the lower part of the house
and the family live on the roof under a kind of grass-tent.
In Ladak, a little earth heaped up before the door and
impressed with a large wooden seal, was sufficient, some
years ago, to protect a house in the absence of its owner.
In Dardistan bolts, etc., show the prevailing insecurity.
I have seen houses which had a courtyard, round which
the rooms were built, but generally all buildings in

* *Vide* my comparison between Dardu buildings, etc., and certain ex-
cavations which I made at Takht-i-Bahi in Yusufzai in 1870.

† Seduction and adultery are punished with death in Chilas and the
neighbouring independent Districts. Morality is, perhaps, not quite so
stern at Gilgit, whilst in Yasin, Hunza, and even in Nagyr before 1886,
great laxity is said to prevail. [484]

birth) of Brôz; Abdur-Rahman (low-born) at Owir (Bar-173
pesh), and Badshah-i-Mulk, also of Owir, who was reared
by the wife of Fath-Ali Shah. There are no doubt other
brothers also whose names I do not know. Murid, who
was killed by Sher Afzul, is also an illegitimate brother.

A few words regarding the places mentioned in recent 361
telegrams may be interesting: Shogôth is the name of a
village, of a fort, and of a district which is the north-
western part of Chitrál, and it also comprises the Ludkho
and tributary valleys. Through the district is the road [487]
leading to the Dara and Nuqsán passes, to the right and
left respectively, at the bottom of which is a lake on which
official toadyism has inflicted the name of Dufferin in super-
session of the local name. Darushp (Drôshp) is another big [712]
village in this district and in the Ludkho valley, and Andarti
is a Fort in it within a mile of the Kafir frontier. The in-
habitants of Shogôth are descendants of Munjanis, whose
dialect (Yidgah) I refer to elsewhere, and chiefly profess to
be Shiahs, in consequence of which they have been largely
exported as slaves by their Sunni rulers. Baidam Khan, a
natural son of Aman-ul-Mulk, was the ruler of it. 133
The Ludkho valley is traversed by the Arkari river which falls
into that of Chitrál. At the head of the Arkari valley are
three passes over the Hindukhush, including the evil-
omened "Nuqsán," which leads to Zeibak, the home of the
heretical Maulais (co-religionists of the Assassins of the
Crusades) in Badakhshán. It is shorter, more direct, and
freer from Kafir raids than the longer and easier Dora pass,
Owir is a village of 100 houses on the Arkari river, and is 361
about 36 miles from Zeibak. Drasan is both the name
of a large village and of a fort which commands the Turikoh
valley, a subdivision of the Drasan District, which is the
seat of the heir-apparent to the Chitrál throne (Nizám-ul-
Mulk). Yet the *Pioneer*, in its issue of the 5th October 000
last, considers that Lord Lansdowne had settled the ques-
tion of succession in favour of Afzul-ul-Mulk, that Nizám-
ul-Mulk would thus be driven to seek Russian aid, but that

000 and have at all times borne a high reputation for bravery. In
 648 former days, Chilas, with the neighbouring valleys of Darel
 and Gor, owed allegiance to Gilgit, but the Chilasis were
 notorious for the way in which they tyrannised over the whole
 surrounding country, making frequent raids, plundering and
 carrying off men, women, and children into slavery. The
 Cashmere, Kishengunga, Astor, and Gilgit Valleys were fre-
 quently laid under contribution, and they boast of having
 once plundered Iskardo. During the Sikh occupation of
 Cashmere, an expedition was sent against Chilas, but sus-
 tained a disastrous defeat. Permission was granted by the
 British Government, in 1851, to the Maharajah Golab Sing
 to exact reprisals for a successful raid, and two columns
 entered Chilas,—one from Cashmere by the Lolab Valley,
 and one from Astor by the Mazenoo Pass. The Chilas
 fort was taken, and the Chilasis made submission, agreeing
 to pay a yearly tribute of a hundred goats and five tolas
 of gold, and engaging that the fort of Chilas should not
 • [712] be re-built. Takk is now the only fortified place in Chilas.
 Since then Chilas has given no trouble to the Cashmere
 Government. Three hostages reside in Cashmere, and are
 changed yearly. Cashmere officials do not, however, visit the
 country, and any attempt to exercise authority would prob-
 ably be resisted.

533 The love of music, dancing, and polo, which are so marked
 535 among all the neighbouring communities, are unknown in
 526 Chilas; and ponies, which are common enough elsewhere, are
 scarce.

361 The country is bare and treeless. The village of Chilas is
 [133] situated about half a mile from the Indus, on a plain three
 miles in length, and from a mile to a mile and a half in breadth,
 sloping gently down to the river. Booner, though a dependency
 of Chilas, has paid a separate tribute to Cashmere of twelve
 173 goats and three tolas of gold since 1842. The Chilasis relate
 that in former times a Hindoo Rajah, named Chachai, ruled in
 Chilas over the whole of Shinkari, but that, dying childless,
 his country became divided into republican communities, as at
 present. In later days a disastrous civil war broke out in the
 community between two brothers, Bôt and Matchuk, which
 ended in the defeat and expulsion of all the partizans of the
 latter. The Bôte are now the most prosperous family in
 Chilas.' Tradition still preserves the name of Naron, a

¹ This is perhaps the origin of the name "Bôte," applied indiscriminately to all
 Dards by Cashmere officials.

increases in density. Forty miles below Chitral a route leads from the main valley past Ashuret over the Lowri Pass to the Afghan state of Dir. Twenty miles lower down, at Birkot, is the mouth of the valley inhabited by the Siah Posh of the Bushgali tribe, the upper end of which is entered from the Dorah Pass. Several smaller valleys are inhabited by Siah Posh, who have lost their independence, and at Bailam the southernmost Kashkar village is passed, and the Afghan state of Asmar is reached. The boundary between Kashkar and Asmar is marked by a wall built across the valley on the right bank between Bailam and Nawakali, and on the left bank by the small stream below Saoo. The valley for many miles above the boundary is reputed to be extraordinarily fertile.

Chitral, which is the seat of the ruler of Kashkar, comprises six large villages, which extend for 3 miles along both sides of the river at an elevation of about 4,000 feet. Its name has gradually come to be applied to the whole country. On the right bank is the fort in which the Mihter, or Badshah, —for he is known by both titles,—resides. Half a mile above the fort is an excellent wooden bridge protected by a stone tower at each end. All the forts in Kashkar differ in construction from those inhabited by the Shin and Boorish races, having inordinately high towers rising 18 feet above the ramparts, which are themselves 30 feet high. Their distribution also gives evidence of a more secure state of society. Instead of every village having one, and sometimes two, forts sufficient to hold all the inhabitants, as is the case in the valleys draining directly into the Indus, the only forts in Kashkar are the abodes of rulers of districts, or persons nearly related to the ruler.

The ruling family are styled Katooré, from Shah Katoor, brother of Shah Khushwakt, the ancestor of the reigning family of Yassin; but the name Kator seems to have been applied to the country in former times, before the existence of the present dynasty of rulers. The present Mihter, Aman-ool-Mulk, is about 58 years of age, and notorious for his astute and deceitful character. The number of the population he rules over can only be roughly computed, and probably amounts to less than 200,000 souls. These numbers would appear scanty for so large an extent of country, but the population is wholly agricultural, and, as in all these very mountainous countries, the habitations are, with few exceptions, confined to a narrow strip along the sides of streams.

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Habits and Customs.

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in the colloquial: Dr. Leitner has collected a large number of Shina songs.

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Oral traditions and genealogies are also preserved in families to whom this duty is assigned, and carefully handed down from father to son.

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The ancient weapons were bow and arrows, battle-axe and round leather shield. Those able to afford it also wore a shirt of mail and a steel cap. The bow and battle-axe have been replaced by matchlock and sword, but are not yet quite obsolete. Though powder is easily made, the tribes have to depend on Cashmere and Badakhshan for matchlock barrels, so Robin Hood's weapon is still used in the chase. The bows are made of strips of ibex horn, softened in water and bound together, and are very tough, powerful weapons. The battle-axes are of different shapes, according to locality, some of them being inlaid with silver, or having engraved patterns on them. The old weapons are carefully preserved and produced on the occasion of weddings, which would not be thought complete without them. A bridegroom presenting himself at the house of his father-in-law elect without a battle-axe would be sent away to get one, and if unable to do so would have to make an extra payment. In the present day the men of Chitral are noted for their swordsmanship, which has gained many a victory over matchlocks. In 1852 a regiment of Goorkhas in the Maharajah of Cashmere's service were cut to pieces by Chitral and Yassin swordsmen within 3 miles of Gilgit, though they formed square, and tried to reach the fort from which they had been cut off, in that formation.

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Dard warfare is, however, seldom of a very resolute nature, and their records are full of accounts in which two or three days' skirmishing has led to the defeat of one party or the other with the loss of a few men only. Every village has one or more forts according to the number of inhabitants, in which all can take refuge in case of need. Owing to the easily defensible nature of the country, surprise is absolutely necessary to success. An attack having been determined on, every effort is made to throw the enemy off his guard, and then, by a succession of forced marches, possession is gained of the pass or the narrow part of the valley which forms the key of his country. Should these be gained, the inhabitants of the invaded country take refuge in their forts. Their defence then depends almost entirely on the state of their supplies. Sometimes their water-supply is

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From Hatū Pir there is a great descent, of about 5000 feet, / 33
by a zigzag road, steep and rough. We do not immediately reach
the Indus Valley, but we go first to where the end of the Hatū
spur nearly meets the mountain on the opposite side of the Astor
River, leaving but a narrow channel for the water. Here the [491]
Astor River is spanned by two rope-bridges, made of birch twigs,
and by a wooden bridge, over which ponies can be taken; a tower [712]
has been built that commands the passage; the position is held
by some forty soldiers, who keep a good look-out. The place is a
strange one; the soldiers live in caves in the rock; the rock
overhangs, so as to keep off the sunshine for the greater part of
the day; still the air becomes burning hot in summer; in
winter, though no snow falls, the cold is somewhat severe.

Here crossing and following down the Astor River we soon
debouch into the Indus Valley and find ourselves on the stony
alluvial tracts, over nine miles of which, with small ups and downs,
we have to go before reaching Bawanjl.

BAWANJL.

This is a spot where at one time was a good deal of culti- [311]
vation, and it is likely that fruit-trees once shaded it; but 175
during the wars of two or three generations back it was laid waste
and became entirely depopulated, and nought but bare ground 712
remained. At that earlier time it was inhabited by Dārds, but
was ruled, as I am informed, from Rondū; it was by Sulaimān
Shāh's invasion that it was laid waste.* At the present time
Bawanjl has a very small area under cultivation, but the place is
of some importance as a military post, since on the holding of
it depends the passage of the Indus on the way to Gilgit. There
is a fort which was built by the Dogrās; it is manned by about
seventy men, and as many more are in barracks outside. There [697]
is here also a prison, where a gang of incorrigible Kashmiri horse-
stealers are detained; these men enjoy during the day some
liberty for cultivating their plots of land. The valley 132
here is warm and dry; with irrigation two crops can always be [241]
raised.

* See Chapter XIX.

The lower part of the valley, occupied by Gilgit, is from one to three miles wide; it is bounded on each side by steep rocky mountains; the valley itself contains stony alluvial plateaus of various form, and various level above the river, which flows in cliffs worn in them; the greater part of this space is arid and barren, but, as usual, in front of each side ravine is a cultivated space, watered by the side stream, on which is a collection of houses.

The line of mountains on the south-west side of the valley is divided most regularly by these ravines; between each of them the steep rocky masses narrow as they rise. On the north-east side the mountains are of an enormous size; they are well seen from the ridge separating the Se and Gilgit valleys; the rocky spurs lead back to lofty snowy peaks, one of which is over 25,000 feet in height. In front of each ravine on that side, too, is the wide-spread alluvial fan, with a portion of it watered and cultivated. There the mountains are completely bare, but on the south-west side, high up above the lower cliffs, is a growth of pine-wood.

The village of Gilgit is on one of the watered tracts on the right bank of the river; here the cultivated ground is not part of the fan of a side stream, but is on the flat plain of the river alluvium, which makes a terrace 30 or 40 feet above the water. The cultivation occupies the space of a square mile or so, extending from the river bank to the mountains; the irrigating water comes from the nearest side stream. The houses here, as also in Astor, are flat-topped; they are scattered over the plain in twos and threes among groups of fruit-trees, having been rebuilt in this way after the destruction that occurred in the various wars to which Gilgit has been subject; it will take long for the village to recover the abundance of fruit-trees which used to prevail.

The fort of Gilgit is the Maharaja's chief stronghold in Dārdistān. It has been at different times taken, destroyed, rebuilt, added to, and altered. In 1870, when I was there, the appearance of it from the south-west was as represented in the sketch on the next page. The central part with the high towers (one of them loftier than the rest) was built by the ruler Gaur Rahmān during his second reign in Gilgit when the Maharaja Gulāb Singh's troops had been for a

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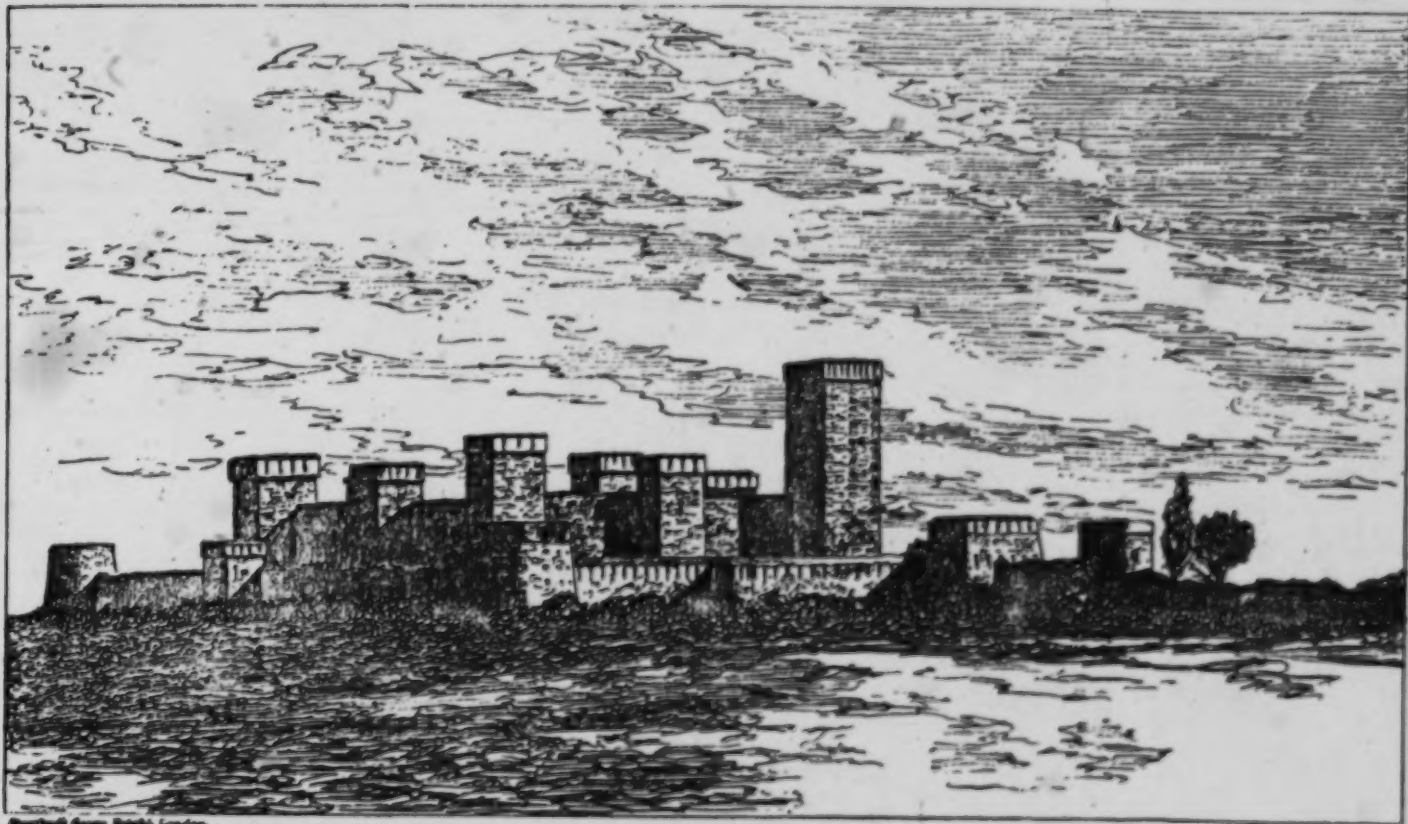
1. Drew G-3 (1863-1872) 1875 AV1 Kashmir

DAVID V3

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DARDISTAN.

[CAP. XVII.



Illustrated by George, British, London.

GILFAT FORT IN 1870.

time dispossessed of it; this is built in the Dard style, of a wooden framework for the wall filled in with stones; it was really a strong work for the country. The next outer construction is the work of the Dogra; it is a wall some 14 feet high, built round three sides of the inner fort (the fourth being protected by the steep river bank), so as to enclose a space between the two for 200 or 300 men to live in; of the seven or eight towers of this outer fort two can mount a gun. Lastly, built cornerwise on to the fort, was what was called the *Sagar*—a space enclosed by a poor stone wall; in this were quartered two or three hundred irregulars.

But since this sketch was made, since I saw the place, changes have occurred. In the spring of 1871 a severe earthquake threw down a considerable portion of the fort, and it has now, I believe, been rebuilt on a better plan.

Gilgit, by my reckoning, is 4800 feet above the sea. Mr. Hayward put it down as 5025 feet; but I think the former figure, which are derived by Boiling Point observations from Rawanji, whose elevation is given by the G. T. Survey, to be the nearer. The climate of Gilgit is not unlike that of Baltistan, only less snow falls, indeed but little snow-fall occurs. The vegetable products are the following—wheat, barley, naked barley, rice (in Gilgit village only), maize, millet, buckwheat, pulse (mung, moin, and masoor), rape, and cotton; and of fruits—mulberry, peach, apricot, grape, apple, quince, pear, greengage, fig (not in any perfection), walnut, pomegranate, and sarshing (*Elaeagnus Moerveyi*, called there *anab*, sarshing being the Tibetan name); besides musk-melons and water-melons. Silk is grown, but in very small quantity; the worm is smaller than that of Kashmir, and the cocoon is small. There are three fabrics made of it; one half silk, half wool, this is much worn by those in station above the ordinary peasant; another half silk and half cotton; the third all silk, a strong though loose-wove fabric which is prized for kamarbanda.

Gold is washed from the river-gravels, as in many other parts of the Indus basin; here it is in coarser grains than I have seen elsewhere, and the return for the labour of washing is somewhat better.

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leads a thousand feet or more above; again, in winter, they can sometimes be turned by twice feeding the river.

That we have here come to a country exposed to the attacks, or, at all events, the alarms, of surrounding enemies is shown by the arrangement of the villages. At Sher itself, and from that place onwards, all the villagers, with their wives and families and their cattle, live within the fort; village and fort are here synonymous.

Sher Fort is the strongest stronghold; it has one face to the bank of the river, whence its supply of water cannot be cut off; all four sides are lofty walls with towers, much in the style of the inner work at Gilgit, but not quite so regularly built. Inside, the whole area is covered, huts are built over it all; these huts are mostly of three stories, the lowest is occupied by the cattle, the second is the usual dwelling-place, and the third is the summer living place; they are lighted by small openings in the roofs. The Raja has a nice set of rooms in one corner. Besides the country-people, there are 100 irregular sepoys of the Maharaja's army quartered in the fort; they occupy the part next to the walls, while the villagers have the centre. Thus the place is very much crowded.

Below, which is also on the left bank, some 15 miles up (8000 feet above the sea), is in the same way a place where the villagers live in the fort; this is a large and prosperous village thick in fruit-trees. Vine is much cultivated; it is grown in small vineyards with the plants at irregular distances, many being old trees; the whole of the vineyard is covered with a framework of sticks supported at a height of from two to four feet above the ground, and over this the vines are trained; some of these vineyards are immediately beneath the walls; they are considered as a good defence to the fort; I think it more likely that the fort is a good defence to the vineyards, which are apt to suffer in a war. Below Fort is not quite so strong as Sher, still it is reckoned one of those which cannot be taken by force—the alternative, treachery, is not an uncommon weapon in these countries.

Gulmatt, Sijgal, and the other villages in this part of the valley, have the dwellings similarly enclosed in forts.

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At evening, the people, who have been occupied in their fields during the day, all come with their cattle within the walls and the gates are closed; all night sentries watch on the towers, and every half hour the "All's well" resounds through the stillness, though it may get less frequent towards the sleepy hours of morning. At dawn an armed party go forth and make the round of all places that might possibly harbour an enemy, and not until their search has proved that the village is clear do others issue for their ordinary avocations. At the time I marched up the valley the Maharaja's relations with the Yásh chief were in a doubtful state, on account of the murder of Mr. Hayward, for which we were trying to get reparation; these precautions, therefore, may have been more than usually attended to. I did not myself lodge within the forts, but, having an escort of 200 men from Gilgit, we were able to keep such a look-out as effectually to prevent any surprise.

The highest point in the valley that I went to was Gáktj. This is the last village in Puniál; it is the farthest in this north-west corner to which the Maharaja's power or influence extends—and hence it is the farthest to which the influence of the Government of India reaches. Gáktj is, by my observations, 6940 feet above the sea; it is on a knob of rock behind which is a sloping plain, all this being 700 feet above the river. It is a cold windy place; snow falls there in winter to a depth varying from 6 inches to 1 foot 6 inches, and it stays three months; here only one crop is grown, while near the level of the river, 600 feet down, two crops are got from the land.

There is a strong fort at Gáktj, containing within it a spring of water; the garrison is composed of the villagers—about fifty fighting men. Part of the plain is cultivated, but beyond that part stretches a narrow stony plain backed by mountains 3000 feet or so high, their sides dotted with pencil-cedar bushes with pine-forest above; this strip of plain extends some eight miles up the valley, at which distance a spur from the mountains comes down and juts against the river, making a natural barrier. This spot, called Húpar, is the extreme point of the Maharaja's territory;

1888]

BUNJI ON THE INDUS

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The Bunji plain now holds but a small fort, commanding the ferry six hundred feet below, and a patch of cultivation. It only wants water brought on to it to make it blossom like the rose. But the climate is not pleasant; the heat in summer all down the Indus valley is very great; 125° in tents is not uncommon in May. We found our camp very hot, as our tents were little double-fly tents, seven or eight feet square, just high enough for a tall man to stand up in with a few inches to spare. Our servants, orderlies, and guard were in single-fly sepoy's tents, and we were all thankful for the shade of a few trees. We visited the fort, which stood on the edge of a great ravine leading into the Indus, surrounded on two sides up to the very walls by fruit-trees, under which some hundreds of Kashmiri irregular troops were now camped. All the arrangements for water-supply, magazines, and commissariat were of the vaguest.

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At Astor we had begun to hear rumours of the heavy losses the Kashmir troops and coolies who had preceded us had suffered crossing the passes, pushed through as they had been in the early spring. Here we heard more details of losses by snow, and now the losses from cholera, dysentery, and other diseases incidental to bad food, over-work, and no sanitary or medical arrangements, began to be evident.

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We crossed the river next day. It was running three hundred yards wide, a very mill race, with huge waves boiling over deep hidden rocks in the centre of its course. We crossed on a large raft, about eight feet by ten, made of a light framework of wood and bamboo, floated on half-a-dozen inflated

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Dard AV3
chitral

1888]

A RULER OF MEN

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huge red spots, finished off with bright red trousers, 644
a costume at once startling and effective. 291

We rode in this way three miles to the bridge, 712 ●
which we dismounted to cross, then on past the fort,
which Robertson was a few years later to know so
well, and to assist in defending so splendidly, to the
polo ground. There the usual performance was gone 541
through, but on a greater scale than I had seen before,
with many more riders and more brilliantly arrayed.
Then we rode back to my camp, which was in an 644
orchard a few hundred yards from the fort, I having
had quite enough of riding hand-in-hand with my
host, a custom which, however honourable, involves
you in difficulties when you have to ride over small
stone walls, narrow water-courses, and in and out of
deep ravines. The Mehtar took his leave after a few
minutes' conversation, and soon after sent us in a most
excellent dinner cooked by the ladies of his house-
hold. In the couple of hours I had been with him he 159
had made a deep impression on me. He was a fine
old man, a striking figure as he rode along, sitting his
horse upright and well; and had the history of his
forty years of rule been unknown, there was that in
him which attracted your attention at once. I felt
instinctively that I was face to face with a ruler of
men.

4: DuRand G-3 (1888-89) 1900 AV1 Kashmir Dard AV3 Chitral

● 712



CHITRAL FORT AND VALLEY.

[facing p. 84]

1888]

THE HORSE OF THE STEPPES

111

when excited by other horses. This was the reason 060
Nizam gave him to me. He nearly did for me once
at Gilgit. No man could stop him once he was off,
but I managed to turn him, and half a mile of flooded
ricefield conquered even the Hubshi. Perfectly un-
tiring, I have ridden him day after day, and after we
had settled in Gilgit I found him invaluable. He was
always put out on a galloping stage; he had no idea
of trotting, and his easy wolf's canter went on eating
up mile after mile without a check. One can well
imagine a horse like this, in the old wild days in
Central Asia, being a present for a king. He had
come as a colt from Badakshan, through Chitral, with
a great reputation, his native name being "Pariñda,"
or the flier, and he had gone to the Akhund of Swat,
and had passed from king to king, till my friend Nizam,
having ruined him, I suppose, at the janáli, and
terrified of his life to get on him, had passed him on
to me. It would be curious to know what blood he
came from: none, I believe, but the Arab could be
responsible for such a combination of courage, fire,
endurance, and gentle temper. His bold heart was
the only one I trusted in implicitly amongst the
dwellers in my kingdom.

We varied the monotony of our march to Gilgit 712
by going down the left bank of the river as far 487
as Cherkilla, the chief fort of Punyal, where we
turned up into the mountains, and had a couple of
days of abortive attempts at sport. There were some
nasty places on the road, one zigzag rising several
hundred feet and unusually steep. Half-way up a
leading pony dislodged a rock, which came rattling
down, and cut my pony's legs from under him. For